

WYCOMBE Wanderers make the 500 mile round trip to Evenwood tomorrow (Saturday) facing something of an unknown quantity in the F.A. Amateur Cup second round.

Blues boss Brian Lee was out of luck last week when he travelled up to watch the Evenwood v Crook Northern League game. The match was called off on Saturday morning as the ground was unfit and so he was unable to get any impressions of tomorrow's opposition.

But Brian was under no illusions about the size of the team's task tomorrow. He described the game as "the most difficult tie of the round."

"It's so foreign and unlike anything we're used to. The atmosphere is so different. It will be bleak and cold and I expect Evenwood to be a high competitive side. The Northern clubs

are usually physical. They have got skill but their main asset is their competitiveness. We've got to match them in this aspect."

FLYING

Apart from the actual game, the Blues have a long journey to overcome. Because of the three day week, Wycombe decided to go by plane thus avoiding the prospect of players taking two working days off. They are flying from Heathrow to Teesside tomorrow morning.

Brian Lee told me of the last time the Blues flew to a match "The last time we flew was on tour from Jersey to Guernsey. We lost 2-0, having played straight after the flight in conditions similar to what we can expect at Evenwood".

The players will have a certain amount of time to relax before the match but an overnight stop would probably have been more satisfactory, if less practical.

F.A. Amateur Cup preview by STUART EARP

The facilities at Evenwood will be a lot different to what the Wycombe players are used to. The changing rooms are shared with the local cricket club while the pitch itself possesses a slight slope. There is seating accommodation for 200.

One player in The Wanderers team who has played there before is Larry Pritchard. The Blues skipper played for Sutton three years back, Sutton drawing that game and winning the replay. Larry feels that if the match is anything like his last visit up North, it will be extremely tough.

Wycombe trained twice this week on Tuesday and yesterday (Thursday) and have only one minor injury worry. Pritchard suffered a knock on the ankle against Bracknell on Sunday but should be fit.

The formation of the team will be interesting after last week's experiment of playing Phil Wood at full back. Terry Rear-

don, who missed Sunday's cup match, should be back in the side which means either Rob Williams or Wood will play at full back. Dylan Evans should also be back in the side at the expense of Tony Price who is playing for England Youth against Scotland Youth at Brighton.

Evenwood Town are not one of the better known Northern League clubs. They have not really made their mark on the national scene and in fact it was only last season that they gave their best performance in the Amateur Cup.

HISTORY

It was then they created club history by reaching the fourth round, losing out after a replay, to Birmingham club, Highgate United.

This season they were exempt until the first round and on January 5 they won at Ormskirk 2-1.

GRAHAM DEARDEN (centre forward): In his second spell with Evenwood. Has played only two games for them since re-joining after a period of 10 months during which time he played for Annfield Plain. A dangerous player in the penalty area.

COLIN ALDRED (inside left): Also in his first season, having played for several other Northern League clubs. Will operate in a striker's role together with Boulton and Dearden.

COLIN ARTHUR (outside left): Yet another player in his first season with the club. An England youth amateur international who has been on trial with Everton. An excellent ball player.

The other players in the Evenwood pool are Billy Heron, Kelvin Myers and Micky Coogan. Heron, who is a defender, has been with the club for three weeks, joining them from North Shields. He has had considerable Northern League experience. Myers, a midfield player, joined the club shortly after the start of the season and recently has been in and out of the side. Coogan has been with the club for six weeks and a month of that time has been spent under suspension for an offence committed with another club.

Evenwood have been members of the Northern League since 1930 and gained their first championship success in 1949. There is no doubt that the most illustrious period in the club's history came at the beginning of the 1970's.

In 1970 and 1971 they again won the league championship and it is interesting to note that these two successes were gained when the club had Billy Bell as their coach.

Bell, who is in charge of Wallsend Sports Centre near Newcastle upon Tyne, was later to guide first Spennymoor — he was in charge of that team when they lost to Wycombe — and then Blyth Spartans to league championship successes in 1972 and 1973.

Evenwood also won the Durham Challenge Cup for the first time in 1970. Their only success in the Northern League Challenge trophy was as far back as 1936.

After their two championship successes Evenwood have again drifted back into the role of just another league side and in the past two seasons have finished in a middle of the table position. This season they have shown indifferent form and the results have been the same.

This is reflected in their league record. At the moment they occupy tenth spot out of 20 clubs with a record of Played 23, won 8, drawn 5, lost 10, goals for 38, against 42 points 21. Altogether they have played 30 games and scored 47 goals while having 51 scored against them.

One of the reasons for this indifference is that during last year the club had the services of three coaches and in fact at the present time their right back and skipper, Bob Tookey, is acting in this capacity.

There has also been much chopping and changing especially in attack and this has led to the forwards failing to get among the goals.

CUP SHOCKS

Certainly Evenwood have not been playing like a team destined for honours this season but cup football provides shocks and the Northern League club are more than capable of doing just this. In fact the Amateur Cup is the last competition in which Evenwood can make a bid for glory this season, because they have no chance to win the league and have been dismissed from the local cup competitions.

They have won only two of the 12 games that they have played since the beginning of November. Wycombe can have no doubts that Evenwood will be determined to make the most of this, the final Amateur Cup Competition.

GOING BY ROAD?

WYCOMBE Wanderers supporters travelling to Evenwood by road should use either the A1 or the M1 to Lancaster and from there to Wetherby and Scotch Corner.

Half a mile past Scotch Corner, travellers should then take the road B6275 to Piercebridge. Follow this road until it joins the A68. Travel along the A68 to West Auckland, and join the A688 road following the signpost to Barnard Castle.

At Evenwood Gate, about one mile from West Auckland, turn right to Evenwood which can easily be seen from the A688 road. The village's landmark is the tall chimney with a flame coming from it — this is the local coke plant.

The Welfare ground at Evenwood has a small stand — the only covered accommodation — which seats 200.

A FULL REPORT

'FREE PRESS' Sports Editor Stuart Earp will be flying with the Wycombe Wanderers team to the North on Saturday, for their Amateur Cup encounter at Evenwood. This is the first time the Wanderers have flown for a match in this country.

Stuart Earp's full match report of the game plus the thoughts and comments of some officials and players will appear in the Midweek Free Press — out on Tuesday afternoon. Make sure of your copy.

Up the yellows!

WYCOMBE Wanderers will be playing in their alternative strip tomorrow at Evenwood, owing to a colour clash. As Evenwood's first choice colours are blue, Wanderers will wear their yellow strip and, in accordance with the F.A. rule, Evenwood also have to switch colours. They will play in maroon.

Meet the Evenwood players

EVENWOOD, in common with many clubs in the Northern League, operate a squad or "pool" system. Here's a run-down on their squad.

BRIAN CRAMPTON (keeper): Joined the club shortly after the start of the present season. His previous clubs have been Conssett and Willington. A tall 'keeper who is safe on the ground.

BOB TOOKEY (full back): Has been with the club for 13 seasons and is the club's skipper. He is also in charge of coaching at the moment. Has played for the Northern League, Durham County and F.A. Amateur XI's and although he was a member of the England party four years ago, he was never capped. A one-club player who is still an excellent defender.

EDDIE ROSS (full back): Now in his 8th season with the club. Previously with Shildon. Has played several games this season in a midfield role.

DAVID ARMSTRONG (wing half): In his first full season with the club. A small, terrier type of player who operates in midfield. Previously with Stockton.

COLIN HALLIMOND (centre half): His only club in top class amateur football. Has been with Evenwood since 1968 and

has always commanded a regular place. A dominant figure in the defence.

TONY MONKHOUSE (wing half): Has been with the club for 12 seasons. He will operate in the sweeper's role. Tony has gained several minor representative honours.

VIC BOURGOISE (outside right): Hails from the Channel

Islands and is serving in the Army at Catterick. A British Army representative. Tall, well built player, who is equally at home in the attack or defence.

STEVE BOULTON (inside right): In his first season with the club. He made a big impact when he joined but has not been so prominent in recent games. Will be one of the front runners.

How they stand

NORTHERN LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blyth Sp.	24	19	2	3	58	20	40
Spennymr	25	16	4	5	39	29	40
Bingham	28	17	3	8	54	33	37
Bishop A.	23	11	7	5	39	21	29
Wington	21	13	5	5	53	34	29
Tow Law	21	13	2	6	35	28	28
Ferryhill	21	11	4	6	32	38	26
Penrith	25	11	3	11	39	45	25
North Sh.	21	10	4	7	38	28	24
Evenwood	23	8	7	10	33	42	21
Whitby	25	7	5	11	33	44	21
Conssett	22	7	4	11	30	34	18
Whitley B.	20	7	2	10	25	25	17
Durham	21	7	3	11	32	37	17
Shildon	21	5	6	10	34	38	16
West Auck.	25	6	6	14	29	60	16
Ashington	17	6	2	9	25	29	14
South Bk.	22	4	5	15	21	41	11
Crook T.	23	3	4	16	24	59	10
Stanley U.	18	3	3	12	21	35	9

ROTHMANS ISTHMIAN LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bishop's S	29	16	8	5	57	39	56
Dulwich	30	15	11	4	49	24	56
Hendon	23	16	5	2	41	10	52
Wycombe	23	16	4	3	61	21	53
Leam	25	15	7	3	53	26	48
Lstone	26	14	6	6	40	22	48
Hayes	25	13	6	6	49	26	45
Oxford	29	10	12	7	31	34	42
Ilford	29	11	8	10	38	34	41
Tooting	31	11	7	13	41	46	40
Barking	30	10	6	14	40	49	36
Kings	22	9	8	13	29	34	34
Sutton	26	8	10	8	34	35	34
Walton	19	9	5	5	32	23	32
Enfield	24	9	5	10	30	28	32
Hitchin	22	9	5	8	40	35	32
Wal-stow	28	8	8	12	32	43	32
Woking	17	9	1	7	29	29	28
Bromley	29	6	6	17	29	45	24
Clapton	20	6	2	14	15	100	11
St. Albans	28	2	4	22	21	69	10
Casuals	26	2	2	22	17	66	8